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v.16:no.3
1953

Augustana

No. 3 TORONTO, ONT. SPRING, 1953

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"I think you have a good bunch of writers in C.P.M. The magazine is developing a character of its own."

B. K. Sandwell

* * *

"I am impressed by the quality of poetry and production of C.P.M.

Howard Sergeant, English poet and critic, Editor of "Outposts"

* * *

"We note with pleasure that valiant little periodical maintains its standard of general excellence. Mr. Bourinot will be thanked by very many others for his frank and fearless utterance of something that badly needed to be said."

W. J. Hurlow in The Ottawa Citizen

* * *

"The sad fact that our Canadian Poetry Magazine keeps alive only by the skin of its teeth makes me wish that every man in this room would get acquainted with that quarterly and help the world to understand that there are new voices in this new country that are worth listening to."

—From an address by the late Arthur Stringer

* * *

"CANADIAN POETRY MAGAZINE, Autumn, 1952, has arrived in the first number of its 16th year. Under an able line of editors and with the generous assistance of many friends, Canadian Poetry Magazine kept going and has held its reputation as one of the best verse magazines in the English language. Mr. Bourinot has known how to retain the seniors while encouraging juniors. We wish him and the quarterly many more productive years."

W. A. Deacon in Globe & Mail

CANADIAN POETRY MAGAZINE
677 DUNDAS STREET WEST ($2.00 a year
TORONTO, ONTARIO 50 cents a copy)

ENCLOSED FIND THE
SUM OF.....

Subscription to Canadian Poetry Magazine for.....year.

Commencing.....

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

CANADIAN POETRY MAGAZINE

VOLUME 16
No. 3 — Spring, 1953

Published by

THE CANADIAN AUTHORS ASSOCIATION

Canadian Poetry Magazine

A quarterly magazine, published by the Canadian Authors Association for the encouragement and development of Canadian verse. Annual subscription, $2.00; single copies, 50 cents. Verse published in the Magazine will be paid for at the rate of 1 cent a word with a minimum of one dollar. The Magazine shall have first publication rights only; the copyright will remain with the author. Verse published elsewhere will not be accepted for publication. If return of manuscript is desired, a stamped, addressed envelope must be enclosed. *Only Canadian stamps are acceptable.* Contributors from U.S.A. and other countries should use International (or Imperial) reply Coupons. Individual criticism of verse submitted cannot be undertaken. Address, Business Manager, "Canadian Poetry Magazine", 677 Dundas St. West, Toronto, Canada.

Patrons of poetry are reminded that we pay for all poems printed, and are grateful for donations to defray the expense of this policy.

Manuscripts should be mailed to The Editor—P.O. Box 803, Postal Station "B"—Ottawa, Ontario.

FOUNDATION SUPPORTERS

It is, perhaps, unnecessary to state that a magazine such as this is not a profit making venture: It is published by The Canadian Authors Association for the encouragement of poetry in Canada and its continued appearance is only made possible by the generosity of its Foundation Supporters.

Contributions are needed and would be very welcome.

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CANADIAN
POETRY
MAGAZINE

Spring 1953

VOLUME 16 - - NUMBER 3
TORONTO, ONT.

EDITOR - - - ARTHUR S. BOURINOT, F.R.S.L.
P.O. Box 803, Postal Station B, Ottawa, Ontario

Authorized as Second Class Mail, Post Office Department, Ottawa.

"To write not to be understood is no less vaine than to speak not to be heard. Fooles and Madmen use to talk to themselves in Publique, and he that publishes that which he would have no Man understand but himself do's the same thing."

SAMUEL BUTLER

CARL SANDBURG ON POETRY

"I am all for the quality of mystery which attaches to great poetry. I am not against abstractions. There are abstractions you can love. The Declaration of Independence has a few abstractions. So has the closing of Lincoln's Message to Congress of 1862. So has the Gettysburg Address. And so has the Second Inaugural. But I am not speaking of such abstractions. I am speaking of abstractions of the obscurantists, the ear-wiggling abracadabra boys (who use a Morse code for the left and right ear) with lines which never mean what they say. I say, and right merrily, 'To hell with the N-i-e-w Criticism !' "

—Carl Sandburg, in response to his receiving the Gold Medal for Distinguished Achievement from the Poetry Society of America at its 43rd Annual Dinner in New York on January 13, 1953.

—From the Bulletin of The Poetry Society of America.

EDITOR'S NOTE

In the next two issues we hope to publish articles on English poetry and American poetry, the former by Howard Sergeant, English poet and critic and editor of "Outposts" and the latter by Joseph Joel Keith, the well known American poet and critic.

A.S.B.

ADVICE TO THE REJECTED

(From a Letter to the Rejected Poet, by R. S. Kennedy, *Canadian Poetry Magazine*, Vol. 2, No. 4, April, 1938.)

"I would suggest that your verse is simply and nicely written, but it shows too little originality, either in the matter or manner of it, to be satisfactory.

"In spite of the example of some well known poets, I am of the opinion that the art of poetry has a high place, which is *not* occupied by any other art. When you merely draw a picture of some nature scene, you are doing something which can be better done in prose, or by a painter . . .

"Hardly any of your verses make the slightest attempt to give your nature pictures any meaning beyond the mere fact of their existence. Nor do I notice much attempt to invent metaphors and draw analogies which will be different from those of thousands of other poets.

"Something more than a strong feeling that the scene before you is a pretty one is necessary to make worth while the writing of poetry about it. Some strong emotion should be present in the writer, and that emotion, however it may be disciplined and adorned, must show in the poetry and communicate itself to the reader . . . I may be arrogant and fanatical; I may be intolerant of neat ecstasy, blind to the grandeur of pettiness, deaf to the thunder of tea-cup storms, but to me poetry is the greatest of all arts. To me it has a place uniquely its own—the highest place. Music may appeal more directly to the emotions, art to the pictorial sense, and prose to the intellect, but great poetry alone can combine all those powers and thus satisfy all the needs of a complete and civilised man."

A BOY AND A GIRL

Under the words
  Of their idle patter,
Pulses the most
  Important matter.

Through rumors of wars,
  They move in a trance;
The world's fate pivots
  Upon their glance.

About these dreamers
  Is unfurled
The destiny
  Of all the world.

A boy and a girl
  In drifting by
Make all creation
  Stir in their sigh.

(Paterson, N.J.) *Louis Ginsberg*

EPITAPH ON THE "EMPRESS OF CANADA"

Is this dream's end, O builder,
  The pride of master, mate,
The crewmen's hearts who filled her
  And wept to see her mate;

And all that ghostly city
  Who sailed her endless seas
In triumph, love or pity,
  Under her Pleiades?

No ! gathering sun and thunder
  And gulls in secret league,
And all deep creatures under
  With bergs in white intrigue—

Among all winds of heaven,
Where'er her spirit shone,
Over the oceans seven,
Her soul goes sailing on !

(Montreal) *Leo Cox*

ENIGMA: GIRL AT A WINDOW

What are you thinking of, girl with grey eyes
and the face of a maid-of-honour to the Valois?
Paint on the window ledge is flaking
beneath your rounded cinquecento arms;
the Venetian blind drags a broken slat
above your pale-blue-nyloned shoulders.

This window is a mean frame for your beauty.
You should lean from a casement in a castle wing
built in the time of Henri Quatre,
a swag of apricot brocade drawn back
and looped extravagantly with tasselled cords.
Below you in the courtyard a tall fountain
should flare from a throat of bronze,
mignonette and lilies border the flagstones.
Listen ! Far in the forest a hunting horn !
What are you thinking of, girl with grey eyes?
A canter down the avenue of beeches,
a secret pavilion deep in blue bee-larkspur?

There at the curb, a chip van edges to a parking;
the smell of spilled fat rises hot and smoky.
. . . Tomorrow is your day off at the plant . . .
Are you considering a sale of coats as advertised
to clear? "Three exciting styles to choose from
in sable-dyed Australian coney,
terms, for convenience, a small deposit,
and our easy, weekly payment plan."

(Grand Falls, Newfoundland) *Lenore A. Pratt*

FOR A RONDO BY FREDERICK THE GREAT

This flowing sweetness of a flute and strings
Descends the fearful void of night and time
And pours into an unpretentious room
Where I, having no benefit of blood or crest,
May listen at my pleasure.
No etiquette of court demands a smile,
A curtsey, or the formal word of praise;
No favourite pack of royal dogs distracts,
No supper rich with meat and marzipan
Follows upon the hour of nine . . . A log
Quilted with pewter ash sinks on the fire,
A birch by the window tautens in the cold.

O, I have never seen the round towers standing
With narrow watchful eyes that search the plain
Where once the Order of Teutonic Knights
Under a thousand pennons flickering in the wind,
Rode forth to battle the unregenerate heathen:
And I have never walked in dark Germanic forests
Where leans half hidden in a mottled pink of foxgloves,
The charcoal burner's hut, ragged with thatch:
Nor have I breathed the Baltic heathland grown
With gorse and rose, nor traced the snowy crags
Of mountains in whose secret glades, perpetual
And cloudless morning burns with crocuses
Candy-striped in lavender and orange.
And yet before me rise those sunny valleys,
The windlass forests, and that ancient steepled town
Where old Bach struggled, trusting in the Lord.

Turn, Frederick, from the contemplation of eternity,
That briefly I may look into your face
And try the riddle of all despots, vain
As you were vain, in some accomplishment,
Even the composition of a rondo,
Yourself the soloist on a silver flute.

(Grand Falls, Newfoundland) *Lenore A. Pratt*

ROSARY

Older than the catacombs
is this rosary
of tear-shaped leaves,
yellow as Florentine ivory
falling from the wayside elm.

And should one say
a Pater Noster as each
in lovely descent like water
drips and spirals?
Or should one be silent and marvel?

For this rosary antedates
the Mass, the Missel, the Breviary
in its casual acceptance
of winter and the buried life,
in invisible vita nuova.

(North Abington, Mass.) *Christine Turner Curtis*

THE UNATTAINABLE

A poem should be
Smooth and unrippled
As Ionian Sea,
Brightly stippled
With freshness of thought
(Golden treasure
Continually sought),
Must have a measure
Of rhythmic delight,
Lilt or dance
And spirit's flight,
Wile to entrance—
Yet be clear as a thrusting lance.

(Chester, N.S.) *Margaret Lathrop Law*

BETRAYAL

In the young summer morning the flax field lay violet blue
Under sturdier blue of prairie sky.
Dad said, "Old Beth didn't come home last night.
She's gone somewhere to have her calf."
I slipped from the house for mother would say,
"Where are you going?" "That child needs a coat.
We must sell something and buy her one."

Over the brow of the bluff I hurried,
Breathless and barefoot I padded on strong brown legs.
I found Beth deep in the pasture's corner,
The red gold calf stood, wobbly, beside her.
Beth mooed gently because she trusted me,
I patted her and warmed my dew-cold feet where she had lain.
I wriggled my toes and drew a deep breath,
"Thank you, God, for this morning," I said.

Hair swirled and waved, the red gold calf was sleek,
Clean licked by his mother's raspy tongue.
Brown eyes alert he sniffed cautiously,
But I crooked my arm about him and snuggled my cheek
Against the new born warmth of his neck.

In time I taught him to drink,
Mouthing my fingers as he lowered his head;
"Oh, I love you !" I whispered,
It was our secret.
He slopped the warm, sweet milk upon me,
Later mother would scold, "Just look at your dress !"

On a morning when the violet blue flax blossoms were gone
And the field was flat brown, I wakened late;
A darkness hung in the strong blue of the sky,
Frightened I slipped out, sun bonneted and calico clad;
The calf's halter swung on the red barn's side,
Black shadow trailed from blacker leather like a noose.

Empty chain dangled on the wall.
Heart thumping and dry mouthed I called, "Mother ! Mother !"
Where is the calf?"
"Oh, the calf," she answered, and her voice held nothing in it,
"This morning the butcher bought him.
Just right for veal," he said.
"Now we can get your coat."

(Victoria) *Mary Carr Wright*

WORDS, WORDS, WORDS

(For a friend who gave me Christopher Morley's
"THE MAN WHO MADE FRIENDS WITH HIMSELF")

From Webster and the Oxford spill
Unheeded waterfalls of words,
All apt to serve us and to thrill
Us to delight and song, until
We emulate the birds.

But miser-like we take but few,
And these abrade to death with use,
And make each do the work of two,
And in wrath rarely make ado
In prodigal abuse.

O pugnant words that sting and shout
In epigram and epithet
Bestowed on rascal and on lout,
And blossomed nouns to wreathe about
The loves we can't forget !

And so, recruit vocabularies
With well-set consonants and vowels
From rapes and raides on dictionaries,
And scorn the scanty repertories
Of asses aping owls.

(Regina) *George Walker*

POESY

(After Paul Valery)

As though by a sudden surprise
Jolted, a mouth that had lain
Serenely at Poesy's breast
Sank back again.

O Mother Intelligence, whence
That fountain of tenderness welled,
Say, by what negligence is
Your milk now withheld?

Scarcely was I at the breast,
Overcome by the bliss of white bonds,
Rocked on your bosom's sea-wave
That stilled all my wants;

Scarce had my lips taken hold
In the heavenly deeps of your night
When I felt, as I drank in the dark,
An invasion of light:

God in his essence dissolved
And I, in a langurous dream
Surrendering body and soul
To the easement supreme.

I touched the pure borders of night,
Dying I no longer knew,
For a river that ran without seam
Flooded me through.

O by what figment of fear,
By what sombre deceptive eclipse
Is this marvellous life-giving vein
Reft from my lips?

Constraint ! 'tis a sign that the sense
And the soul are no longer at one.
No more does the silence between us
Soar like the swan.

Goddess, your glances refuse me
Immortal treasures, my own,
And the flesh that was tender beneath me
Lies like a stone.

You shut me away from the skies
—How hard and how harsh a reproof !
Could you live, think you, wanting my lips?
Could I live without love?

But a voice from the sunken Source
Answered me, murmuring low:
"So hard did you bite me, my child,
That the milk would not flow".

(Winnipeg) *K. W. Maurer*

MIDSUMMER

On the ground
There's no sound,
Only beat
Of fierce heat
In the air
And the stare
Of sun bare.
Then a high
Lullaby
Starts to play
In the sway
Of the trees.
Soon the breeze
Makes a cool,
Rippled pool
As time winds today
On her spool.

(Whaletown, B.C.) *Gilean Douglas*

HOUSEWIVES OF HARROW

It is not always in October
That grief falls like rain !
But we heard the drums beat far away . . .
Though far away on a cool crisp morning.
We had talked of Autumn and a week's end wandering
Over rough terrain toward the painted woods,—
And we recalled the sombre sun,
Red, and fallen low
In the late afternoon.

It was not always near the sweetbriar
That Death awaits us slyly there . . .
I thought of another one, as you or I,
That Sunday treading the silent yielding turf
Down in a copse and through a grove of beechen trees.

The commuter with his ticket
Dashing through the wicket
To another routine day;
And the lady on her way
For the latest tea-room chatter,
And such other things that matter.
A boy in knee-length pants,
From Sussex or from Hants,
Who was taught to Sir
All those he deemed superior.
Old ladies bowed and bent,
Wearing lace and lavender scent,
Musing on the Diamond Jubilee—
(It might have been to you, or me !)

They had been just little girls,
Wearing pinafores and curls,
Years ago when they rode down
To see the Queen at London town . . .
"And to think that we have lived, my dear,
To see the young'un crowned next year !"

It might have been to you, or me,
Sucking at a plum,
Or gazing out of the window tediously,
Heedless of a distant drum.

The squire who weekly rode to Hounds
Was on his way with fifty pounds:
And brokers clerks, who daily ride,
Laid the business phrase aside,
And transformed themselves to sporting men,
—An act that daily reached its acumen:
"It was hardly cricket," one began . . .

And now who would know it
Which was Agnes Drew, and what was Corporal Blowitt?

Fog-bound, holding death:
What I don't know is this;
With what foreknowledge or on what golden promise
Do others die more bravely?
I stood with the housewives of Harrow
And watched them wind the long white winding sheet
With their hands humble, yet holding tenderness, pride;
We might have been more brave, in death, knowing this.

(Toronto) *Edward Jameson*

AUTUMN

Once more the garden flowers are gone,
Gone where our lost hopes go;
Their loveliness sleeps deep beneath
The silent loneliness of snow.
The frozen fruit on leafless trees
Can tempt the winter birds on wing
To pause in flight along the path
That leads the wind-swept world to spring.

(Calgary) *Elizabeth Garbutt*

NOW, IN THE SPRING

With song upon her lips
So lightly she stepped—
How could she rest
Within her narrow bed
Now, in the Spring.

Around this pool
Tall lilies grew—
Blue, blue as her eyes,
And golden poppies
Waved in the breeze
As yellow-gold as her hair.

She could not rest
When daffodils rise
From their frosted sleep,
She who was fair as any flower
Shall come again
Now, in the Spring.

(Calgary) *Ethel Errol Boyd*

COUNTRY TWILIGHT

The desert willows, ivory-blossomed,
Stain the air with fragrance.
Overhead a martin cuts space like a flying scythe,
While one phantom-ship of a star
Anchors down the west.

Here is a world of quiet,
Unmindful of the dark thunder of man's follies,
Unaware of the savage lunge of his greed.

(San Antonio, Texas) *Lucia Trent*

LAKE AT DUSK

Gently
At amber dusk
On the hushed lake waters
The Buddha of the silence broods
Alone.

(San Antonio, Texas) *Lucia Trent*

HINTERLAND

Moon-hollow night replaces booming day
With a whisper of litter in city gutters.
The seconds click themselves in darkened rooms
Where insomniacs hear the lonely thud of their hearts
And the sleepers mutter and groan to cellared selves
Pressing the edges of retreating reason.

Then muted images of daytime rise
Into the vaulted silences of thought—
Crying to one of peace he dares not choose
And to another of a death he gave
And, always, childhood comes there, asking why
Simplicity became the adult sigh.

Star, tiger, sun and plunging horse
The pale, dead faces and the faceless eyes,
The public shame, the unexpected smiles,
The swollen corpses of our small dismays,
Take their just place and offer their release
Until taut time explodes into the peace—
Jangles us up to wind ourselves to life.

The sleepers rise and yawn and wash and eat
Read paper Successes, swallow their defeat
Then, open-eyed, accept their complex way
Into the simple darknesses of day.

(Toronto) *Peter M. Urquhart*

NOCTURNE

O sad, defenceless city how you sprawl
Against the indifferent earth, and hide your fear
In guilty pools of shadow; so tall and pale
Is this sterile, midnight vault, so clear

This austere light without warmth or pity
That etches each imperfection in one chaste tone
Strips each sad secret to the omniscient eye
That rides the cold darkness, silent and alone

And leaves no shame unseen: tower by tower,
Crevice by crevice, near and far
Probes its chill fingers as, hour by hour,
You hug your dead mother, this cindered star.

Oh, how you fear this colourless desire
And how you dread these hollow tombs of space:
But how shall I, born of that brilliance, explain
My own reflection in your ageing, bitter face?

(Toronto) *Peter M. Urquhart*

THE DESK

He was a desk.
His polished top
shone in the sun.

He filed his thoughts
in well-locked drawers—
and hid the key.

Too late, he found
he could not reach
his buried files.

At length he sought
a blacksmith's help
to smash the lock.

(Fredericton) *Robert Rogers*

JOURNEY

As I went up the springtime hill
My heart was gay.
Right merrily I sang of love.
The sun shone all the way.

Now I have reached the longed for top
And stand tiptoe,
My gaze strays down the autumn slope
To the valley for below

The fruit hangs rich upon the vine,
I slow my pace
That I may taste the heritage
Of God's unfailing grace.

For winter wind I have no fear.
Its icy cold
May ravish all the landscape round,
My warm hearthfire shall hold.

(Toronto) *Mariel Jenkins*

ATALANTA RETRACTS

Think you the stranger's feet more swift than mine,
Or that, without deliberation, I
Turned from the course because the dazzling shine
Of golden apples beckoned to my eye?
You do belittle Atalanta then
And count her feminine cunning less than real.
I learned more in those woods Arcadian
Than how to show competitors my heel.

Melanion, my love was never blind.
I saw behind your scheme and loved you more.
But now, with hearts immortally entwined
Let me correct that ancient Grecian lore.
I claim a woman's more designing wit.
The race was mine if I had wanted it.

(Napanee) *M. E. Drew*

THE GAMBLING MAN

This man, this nameless gambler with the dark still eyes—
You say he diced with Onderdonk at Yale,
When Yale had dreams and something to sustain the dreams.
He led the way along an old game trail,

And Van Horne followed, pop gun swinging at his knees.
It must have seemed a toy in his huge hand
That sent construction crews to tear the mountains down,
And string a certain necklace on that uncertain land.

Why is it, then, he's never mentioned in the books and tales
Old timers tell from out the loneliness they know?
Surely he left some mark among the trees,
A solitary figure standing in the snow;

Or sitting in the smoky room considering
A poker hand. My friend, he's in the books; those men
Were camp followers, anonymous, of course,
Outnumbering every army and have always been

The necessary hangers on who did not help
In actual battle. And still no man can say
The names of those who stayed when Caesar's troops embarked,
Peering towards a little island in the spray.

This man was one of them, as memorable,
But unremembered as the dead Chinese who panned for gold
Along the Fraser; the Indian who found a mountain pass
Before the white man did—his tale was never told.

But why this man among so many other men
In such a crowded time? No reason, none would care.
In those momentous days the people went to bed,
And in the frosty mountain morn—the steel was there.

(Vancouver) *Alfred W. Purdy*

GREY JET-PLANE BRAYING

Grey jet-plane braying where the lark had sailed
Pitiful little moments ere you came
Rocketing through thin space, where space had failed
Defeated earth, the while your barbarous frame
Shot past with shattering chaos of dead sound—
Staggering up and falling where the lark
Had idly sung, so near the reedy ground,
Its lyric lost in waves of outraged dark:
Your roar has burned the bridges of the past
And launched its legioned sorrows with their curse;
While in his loneliness, the sweet outcast
Still paints the English meadows in his verse:
I cannot add the gain or score the debt,
For Master Meadow Lark, I hear you yet.

(San Rafael, Cal.) *Cullen Jones*

INTERIOR

The masks of Africa looked down.
The mobile turned. The little coffee

Huddled in the cups, waited the lift
To water, and the clock turned. Brown,

Round masks of Africa above the mantle
Peered in excellent decoration,

With empty eyes to fit the empty room.
What to do? She turned. She turned

The round control, and the calrod burned
In crimson spiral underneath the pot

Of coffee. And she sat,
Smoked until the coffee bubbled hot,

Smoked and sat. The clock turned round.
The masks of Africa looked fat.

(Fargo, N.D.) *Richard Lyons*

BIRTH OF THE TREES

Not by the wave of a wand, and "let there be trees",
Were the giants born. Nature the tireless the toiling
Prefacing the dawn of day for man or mite;
Spinning and using, forever balancing the whole:
The algae of the sluggish pond, lichens and mould—
These the beginnings, the creeping foundation of growth.

This in the carbon age, in the silence of nothing alive:
Gathering texture and depth, the slime and the fungi advancing,
The confervae massing, creating a surface of bog;
Then from the mosses, slow-tufting to plant-kind,
Slim, venturing fingers uplift, and now there are stems.

Reeds rise in phalanx in the marshes, and the ferns
Are uncurling their fronds—incredibly slow, evolution;
And no bird is singing, no bee skims the poisonous air.
Soon—in the time-space of millions—the atmosphere clears;
The carbon absorbed by the stalks and the fronds is debris:
Essential in living, and dying these green things of earth,
Preparing the scene for the insect, the saurian, and man.
Now the bannering conifers, kin to the pines, join the race;
Amazing in beauty, and bringing rare gifts—Trees are born!

(Victoria) *M. Eugenie Perry*

RECOGNITION

It was after the Chopin had ended
in a brilliant shower of sound
that the evening came suddenly alive.

There in the half light we had listened,
secure upon our separate islands,
locked in the loneliness men know.
When we spoke, words meant less
than the language of eyes which met exploratively
to turn without discovery away.

Then suddenly you stepped
across the channel of space
and strangeness was lost
in a soft singing of senses
which brought reality.

(Preston) *Clara Bernhardt*

WILLIAM BLAKE

Blake in an orchard green with island April
saw flame-tipped wings vie with the morning light,
heard angel-syllables among the branches,
felt angel-draperies brush his lips, in flight.

Blake on a cloud-swift night of autumn
saw the beard of god stream in the frosty sky,
saw the long finger of god austerely touching
the sleep-drenched earth, saw god's eon-lidded eye
measure, with less than a sand-grain's movement,
all the weary, wild, indifferent ways of men,
Blake felt the dew-chill grass about his ankles,
heard in the hedge the feather-language of a wren.

So, pierced to the bone with wisdom, Blake turned homeward,
wanting Kate's hair and the fern-cool touch of Kate's hand,
wanting the candle-soft room, the wind on the shingle,
and the night-hush of England folded like peace on the land.

(Baltimore) *Alan Donovan*

SOLILOQUY

I have found a master, I think.
This lanky man with kind eyes,
Susceptible, but still not wholly deceived,
A fool, perhaps, but wise.

I am assured a place by the fire, a bed
That I shall not use, access
To the flat, grey world without.
I shall arch my back and press

Urgently against his legs. He might
In the condescension of godhead forget
To cover the Sunday roast; he might
Turn out to be witless yet.

In fact I think I am suited here, and shall
Take a lover under the stair.
But only the cold midwifery of the moon
Will know where the kittens are.

(Vancouver) *Alfred W. Purdy*

LULLABY

(*Salish*)

Here in the longhouse
I'm swinging the cradle,
I'm pulling the string and
The cradle is swinging;
So rest on your pillow
Of soft, shredded cedar
And close your dark eyes like
The ripe salal berries.

Thunderbird's flying
Far off to the mountains,
So sleep to the murmur
Of rain on the roofing;
You're safe in the longhouse,
I'm swinging the cradle
I'm swinging the cradle,
My little brown baby.

(Vancouver) *Clara Hopper*

BUTTERFLY

Bedraggled now and crushed,
frail soul of fluttering things,
forgive my hands that brushed
the sun dust from your wings;

for though I turn and twist
in weak attempts to flee,
hard hands I can't resist
shall do the same to me.

(Fredericton) *Fred Cogswell*

Book Reviews

CANADIAN SHORT STORIES—edited by Robert Weaver and Helen James—Oxford—248 pp., $3.50.

In the publishing field it is almost proverbial that collections of short stories do not pay. That accounts for the fact that there are so few of them. Let us hope that will not be so in this instance. Oxford University Press is to be particularly commended for producing this very interesting collection.

There have been at least two previous anthologies of Canadian short stories; Raymond Knister's, published in 1928, and now a collector's item, and "Canadian Stories", 1947. The present book has a narrower range than the others because the selection is limited to the best work received by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation for its program, Canadian Short Stories, between the summers 1946 and 1951; whereas the other two covered the whole field. There have not been many collections of short stories by individual Canadian authors; certainly of late years they have been few and far between. Probably the greatest Canadian craftsman in the art of the short story was Duncan Campbell Scott. "In the Village of Viger" is a classic, but who reads classics nowadays?

This book is beautifully produced and has on its jacket a striking painting by the artist, Jack Nichols; in fact it is probably the most striking feature about the book for after careful reading one is not impressed by the fact that any one of these stories is truly great; and perhaps that is not to be expected having in view the limited source of the selection. Undoubtedly the leaven in the loaf is "The Stations of The Cross" by Roger Lemelin, and it is in translation. Here, one feels, is a writer who knows what he is about, who knows what he is doing and how to do it. Here is good story, good writing and good characterization. Perhaps our first statement that there was no great story in the book was, after all too hasty for Mr. Lemelin is a craftsman in the use of words and a master of subtle satire. Another good story but with a more obvious satire is "Mrs. Golightly and the First Convention" by Ethel Wilson; whoever has attended a convention, (and who has not these days?) will recognize the types. Edward McCourt's story "The White Mustang" has something of the Rawling's touch. (It is interesting to note, for what it is worth, how many of these stories concern children.) "The Old Woman" by Joyce Marshall is gripping at times but marred at times by melodrama. Perhaps the one that touches the heart strings most, if that may be considered, is "The Little Ghost" by Gwen Ringwood. It has, no doubt, some of Dicken's sentimentality but all in all is a touching, well written story.

Here is a collection that should find many readers and we recommend it to all interested in a good story. The advantage of such a compilation is that one may pick it up at any time, read a story or two, and then no matter how long after one resumes, no trend or sequence is lost. A similar virtue belongs to anthologies of poetry and essays. This collection would make a good bedside book; and we do not infer in the least that it will put one to sleep; quite the contrary; one or two of the tales might be inclined to keep one awake.

Arthur S. Bourinot

YIELD FROM FLAME—Margaret Lathrop Law—Exposition Press, New York —96 pp., $2.50.

The discriminating reader is likely to skim what is lyrical or epigrammatic in this volume, leaving purely declamatory verses for platform reading —the end for which they were seemingly designed. "Forebears of Cornwall", which made its debut in the CANADIAN POETRY MAGAZINE, touches the highest lyrical level with its lilting, if familiar, melody, while the brief title piece, declaring that—

> "The purplest grape, the greenest leaf,
> Is grown from Vesuvian lava soil . . ."

is a neatly finished prosodic production.

For an example of the versified portraiture which provides one of the interesting elements in the collection, here is "Nodding, They Hurry On":

> "Her pale gray voice is thin as a Georgian spoon
> Clinking in a Sevres teacup.
> Her eyes are windows with the rusty-hinged blinds pulled tight.
> Her thin lips twist like bent hairpins.
> Small ideas rattle feebly in her brain
> Like pennies in a child's half-empty bank.
> 'Ella has always, always been a good kind woman,'
> Her friends nod, hurrying on."

Altogether an interesting and rewarding collection.

THE LOST RIVER—Poems by Lawrence Spingarn—William Heinemann Ltd, Melbourne, London, Toronto—85 pp., $2.50.

While free of echoes, Mr. Spingarn's poems suggest both technical and intellectual fellowship with such contrasting contemporaries as Eliot, Frost, MacLeish. Similar metaphysical and philosophical notes are sounded, although the themes are never, save possibly in the title poem, as fully developed as by the first-named, or as neatly polished as by the second. There is even a reminder of Stevens, if in subject only, in the lyrical double-quatrain dealing with Susannah and the elders.

What this amounts to is that Mr. Spingarn's poetry is definitely twentieth century. This selection is rich in lines that stimulate the intellect and satisfy the ear—lines such as:

> "I see him walking through the empty streets,
> By rooted trees rebuked, past houses lit
> For Christmas and the festive days. He meets
> His shadowed self and thinks no ill of it."

and—

> "After split skies and tardy thunder, rain
> Recalled the children in their pinafores
> To porches tense with sportsmen. Bores
> Peddled the myth of Vicksburg once again."

But I find that I have marked a dozen pieces for discussion—an indication of their provocative power.

"Lost River", the title piece, itself merits, and invites, detailed study, despite its seeming directness. I quote to provide another sample of typical Spingarn than to suggest the quality of the poem, which must be read in its entirety:

> "His pride
> Becomes the slipper squishing through a marsh,
> Ridiculous and inappropriate,
> Fouled by the ooze, and useless after this . . ."

THE SASKATCHEWAN POETRY BOOK—Published by the Saskatchewan Poetry Society—44 pp., 50 cents.

It seems regrettable that the best of these verses should be either purely imaginative ("The Dance of the March Hare", by Dorothy Morrison), or in the abstract vein (Theodore Michie's "Apartments")—that there should be so little of the regional.

The several pleasing nature pieces are unlocalized, the birds in Sylvia E. F. Mitchell's "Winter Jewels", for example, failing to suggest prairie environs to me. And the "little store" which John G. Trehas records so well in "The Narrow Days" might exist in any town, in any province.

However, the society and its annual publication may in time stimulate a sturdy crop of prairie poetry. For 1952-53, it has produced an attractive chapbook.

Goodridge MacDonald

THE TREE OF LIFE—Nathaniel Micklem—Oxford University Press, Toronto —87 pp., 7/6. $1.75.

Dr. Micklem, Principal of Mansfield College, Oxford, follows his earlier publication of "THE LABYRINTH" with another philosophical poem also in Spencerian stanzas. "THE TREE OF LIFE" is the author's answer to man's quest for Truth and the Mystery of Deity.

> "God to dethrone were manhood to unman.
> We live by reverence nor may we deny
> That wider realm beside the senses' span
> Which the heart touched to wonder can descry."

The didactic tone is natural. We seem to expect it.

> "Each least event knows its sufficient cause,
> And Now is Then's sufficient heritage."

SECTION II: Several sonnets on various themes and persons (including lovely Uxori Dilectissimae and Accidie). Then follows a miscellaneous assortment of poems, his subjective reactions to Niagara Falls, Iona, Mansfield College, etc. Finally, what is termed Leviore Plectro, where the Professor doffs his mortar board and puts his feet up. There is a certain nostalgic interest about the persons, places and subjects of philosophical musings. We look in vain for new light shed on old themes. In the treatment of the title poem—a series of theological speculations —the Spencerian

stanza, in spite of the frequent obsolete word and long inversions, answers its own questions with discerning skill. There are doubtless many who would not take exception to the derivative lines and archaic "doth's" and "e'er's." There is a directness and ingenuousness about these poems that is appealing in spite of their recurrent cliches and classicisms. Here's a refreshing note in "Farewell to Canada":

> "Heavy dun cloud-wrack—to our mood responding,
> Apt to sad farewell—yet the birch renascent
> Dons a fresh verdure, and a crown of flowers
> Rests on the woodlands;
>
> Blossoms the blackthorn in the hedge, and frisks now
> Calf and long-shanked foal, and in faith the ploughman,
> Presaging harvest and his due rewarding,
> Rives a deep furrow."

THE FIRST MORNING—Peter Viereck—Charles Scribner's Sons, New York 1952—120 pp., $4.00.

Pulitzer prize winner in 1949 with his "TERROR AND DECORUM" at the age of 33, Peter Viereck offers here a sizeable volume of intriguing verse. Whether or not his avocation is poetry and vocation politics—holding a professorship in history at Mount Holyoke College—he is a Voice of Vision in the world today (vide September Mercury "In Defence of British Imperialism"). His humanistic approach in "Conservatism Revisited—The Revolt Against Revolt, 1815-1949" (1950) tends to intersperse the lines of his poetry. ("I am the prodigal who won't come back.") A fearless rebel, an iconclast, but no mocker, he replies neatly to the castigation of his criticism of the Bollingen Prize to Pound in his "Epitaph for the Nouveaux New Critics"—

> "Was Queen Victoria
> Primmer than precieux new 'Prohibitoria'?"

In taking Shelley's dictum seriously that Poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the world, Viereck tends, at times, "to defy the matter" not only by a "tricksy word" but by some trivial commonplace that jars the whole context, as "Philomel—suddenly vomiting."
But the surrealist pattern he usually adopts can cover a multitude of cliches.

Viereck's protest is also against triteness:

> "BANALITY, our saint, our silly:
> The sun's your adverb, named "Again";
>
> . . .
>
> Who'll love the rose that love wore longest,
> Yet say it fresher than quick rain?"

And in the title poem he spars with tradition, at least converting Arethusa—usually termed a wood-nymph, but here a sea-nymph—as "suddenly transferring life and consciousness from the young girl (sic !) into these hitherto inanimate waters." This lyrical extravaganza seems to overreach even the magic of Artemis and is unconvincing poetry.

But there are other Pastorals, a Sonnet on the Soul of Man, with two rhymes and variant stresses, Grotesques and Irreverences with a dozen Lyrics for good measure. Not least is Dies Illa, written when he was sixteen:

"My dear, we have come to a spell-bound place,
Where sunflowers have eyes that follow us.
Hurry, or twilight will yawn and swallow us.
Hurry; we are watched by a cloud with a crafty face.
Hurry, hurry; the sun is sinking
And clutches your hair . . ."

He has repeated, with some revisions, for the Birth of Song section, Dolce Ossessione (Phobic of wheels I'll hide beneath the sea") and The Planted Skull, formerly titled, The Poet:

"Those famed vibrations of life's dancing dust,
Whose thrice-named pangs are 'birth' and 'death' and 'lust',
Are but the split iambics of his song."

Three years of soldering may be a foil for the quadrangles of Oxford and the classrooms of Harvard, "a kind of bouncing between clouds and clay" but Viereck is one, at least, to dare the depths to "stub against the stars". "His widely attended poetry readings at countless campuses" is a good sign. Poetry has need of a youthful audience.

J. R. G. Adams

Books Received

COLLECTED POEMS OF THOMAS HARDY—MacMillan—916 pp., $4.00—The fourth edition of this classic was published in 1930; it has now been reprinted; a *Must* for libraries and anyone interested in great poetry.

BORDER RIVER—A. G. Bailey—McClelland & Stewart—61 pp., $2.50—Indian File number 5—A new collection of poems by the author of "Songs of The Saguenay" and "Tao".

THE YEARS WORK IN ENGLISH STUDIES,1950—The English Association, Oxford, 1952—288 pp.

PORTRAIT AND OTHER POEMS—R. E. Rashley—Ryerson Poetry Chap Book, number 151—8 pp., $1.00.

A MORNING MOOD—Lorene Frances Milliken—Carillon Poetry Chap Book —12 pp.

JOY AND VERITY—Marie Stopes, with a prefatory note by Walter De La Mare—Clarke, Irwin & Co. Ltd.—126 pp., $3.00.

KENTISH FIRE—Kunigunde Duncan—Bruce Humphries Inc. Bostan.—36 pp., $2.50.

COLLECTED POEMS—J. P. Angold—Peter Russell, London, 1952—55 pp., 8/6.

SO LATE INTO THE NIGHT—Sydney Goodsir Smith, with a Preface by Edith Sitwell—Peter Russell, London, 1952—65 pp., 8/6—To quote from the Fly Leaf, "The use of the Scots language should not deter readers. All unfamiliar words are explained in the glossary."

KEATS-SHELLEY JOURNAL—Volume 2, January, 1953—The Keats-Shelley Association of America Inc., New York.

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